

## Message Text

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ACTION NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 ARA-10 EUR-12 EA-10 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00  
PM-05 H-01 INR-10 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01  
SP-02 SS-15 ICA-11 IO-13 /109 W  
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R 260805Z AUG 78  
FM AMEMBASSY KABUL  
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 9708  
INFO USINT HAVANA  
AMEMBASSY ISLAMABAD  
AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI  
AMEMBASSY TEHRAN  
AMEMBASSY MOSCOW  
AMEMBASSY PEKING

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 1 OF 2 KABUL 6861

EO 11652: GDS  
TAGS: PDIP, PEPR, AF, CU  
SUBJ: AFGHAN/CUBAN TIES MAY BECOME CLOSER IN WAKE OF HAVANA  
CELEBRATIONS

1. SUMMARY: THE GOVT OF THE DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF AFGHANISTAN (DRA) RECENTLY SENT TWO DELEGATIONS TO HAVANA, ONE TO ATTEND THE CELEBRATION OF THE TWENTY-FIFTH ANNIVERSARY OF THE CUBAN REVOLUTION AND THE OTHER TO THE ELEVENTH INTERNATIONAL YOUTH FESTIVAL. THE VISITS RESULTED, INTER ALIA, IN THE SIGNING OF A PROTOCOL BETWEEN THE TWO GOVERNMENTS CALLING FOR TECHNICAL COOPERATION IN THE FIELD OF COMMUNICATIONS. THE STATEMENTS MADE BY REPRESENTATIVES OF BOTH GOVERNMENTS, AS WELL AS THE EXTENSIVE AND FAVORABLE REPORTING IN THE AFGHAN PRESS, SUGGEST THAT AFGHANISTAN COULD BE ATTRACTED BY THE CUBAN VERSION OF NONALIGNMENT AND COULD PRESAGE CLOSER BILATERAL RELATIONS, INCLUDING THE EXCHANGE OF RESIDENT AMBASSADORS. END SUMMARY.

2. IN JULY, THE DRA SENT WHAT THE KABUL PRESS DESCRIBED AS  
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"A HIGH-POWERED DELEGATION" TO PARTICIPATE IN THE TWENTY-FIFTH ANNIVERSARY OF THE CUBAN REVOLUTION, AND ANOTHER GROUP TO ATTEND THE ELEVENTH INTERNATIONAL YOUTH FESTIVAL AT HAVANA. THE DRA STATE AND PARTY DELEGATION WHICH ATTENDED THE CELEBRATION OF THE ANNIVERSARY OF THE CUBAN RESOLUTION WAS HEADED BY DR. SHAH WALI, MINISTER OF PUBLIC HEALTH, MEMBER OF THE POLITBURO OF THE PEOPLES' DEMOCRATIC PARTY OF AFGHANISTAN (PDPA), AND PERHAPS

THE THIRD-RANKING LEADER OF THE AFGHAN REGIME. ABDUL KARIM MISAQ, ALSO A POLITBURO MEMBER AND MINISTER OF FINANCE, AND DEPUTY MINISTER OF COMMUNICATIONS MOHAMMAD ZARIF, WERE THE OTHER PRINCIPAL MEMBERS OF THIS DELEGATION. A FORTY-MEMBER GROUP FROM THE PEOPLES' YOUTH ORGANIZATION OF THE DRA ATTENDED THE X YOUTH FESTIVAL AT THE INVITATION OF THE INTERNATIONAL DEMOCRATIC YOUTH FEDERATION.

3. THE GOVT-CONTROLLED AFGHAN MEDIA GAVE DETAILED ACCOUNTS OF THE ACTIVITIES OF DR. SHAH WALI AND HIS DELEGATION, INCLUDING ENTHUSIASTIC REPORTS ABOUT THEIR MEETINGS WITH MEMBERS OF THE COMMUNIST PARTY OF CUBA. WHILE IN HAVANA, EACH MEMBER OF THE DRA DELEGATION REPORTEDLY HAD MEETINGS WITH HIS COUNTERPART IN THE CUBAN GOVT, AND THE GROUP ALSO HELD DISCUSSIONS WITH RAUL GARCIA PELAEZ, MEMBER OF THE CENTRAL COMMITTEE OF THE COMMUNIST PARTY OF CUBA. FOLLOWING A WREATH-LAYING CEREMONY AT THE MAUSOLEUM FOR SOVIETS WHO HAD DIED IN THE CUBAN REVOLUTION, THE DRA GROUP WAS RECEIVED BY RAOUL CASTRO, WHO EXPRESSED A DESIRE FOR STRENGTHENED TIES BETWEEN CUBA AND AFGHANISTAN.

4. ON JULY 31, DR. SHAH WALI AND HIS DELEGATION ATTENDED A MEETING OF THE DEFENSE COMMITTEE FOR THE CUBAN REVOLUTION, WHOSE MEMBERS DELIVERED "ATTRACTIVE SPEECHES ON THE FRIENDSHIP BETWEEN AFGHANISTAN AND CUBA." DR. SHAH WALI RESPONDED, ACCORDING TO LOCAL PRESS REPORTS, WITH "A ROUSING SPEECH ON THE FRIENDSHIP AND UNITY OF THE TWO COUNTRIES AND THE CARRYING OUT OF THEIR COMMON OB-

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JECTIVE."

5. ON AUGUST 1, THE GROUP MET WITH FIDEL CASTRO, AND GAVE HIM A MESSAGE FROM NOOR MOHAMMAD TARAKI, CHAIRMAN OF THE REVOLUTIONARY COUNCIL AND PRIME MINISTER OF THE DRA. CASTRO ASKED THE GROUP TO CONVEY HIS WARM GREETINGS AND BEST WISHES TO TARAKI. AMONG THE RESULTS OF THESE DISCUSSIONS WAS A PROTOCOL, SIGNED ON AUGUST 3, CALLING FOR INCREASED TECHNICAL COOPERATION IN THE FIELD OF COMMUNICATIONS.

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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 2 OF 2 KABUL 6861

6. WHILE THE ACTIVITIES OF THE DELEGATION FROM THE AFGHAN PEOPLES' YOUTH ORGANIZATION DID NOT RECEIVE AS MUCH DETAILED COVERAGE AS THE PARTY GROUP IN THE LOCAL PRESS, THE HAVANA FESTIVAL ITSELF WAS GIVEN CONSIDERABLE AND FAVORABLE PUBLICITY, INCLUDING TWO FRONT PAGE ARTICLES FROM TASS CARRIED IN "THE KABUL TIMES". PRIOR TO THE OPENING OF THE FESTIVAL, THE JULY 27 EDITION OF THE KABUL DAILY "ANIS" HAD CARRIED AN EDITORIAL, PRAISING THE CONFERENCE FOR BRINGING TOGETHER "REVOLUTIONARY AND PROGRESSIVE YOUTH" FROM "VANGARD AND PROGRESSIVE COUNTRIES." THE EDITORIAL EXPRESSED PLEASURE THAT THE FESTIVAL WOULD TAKE PLACE IN "HEROIC CUBA" AND PREDICTED THAT IT WOULD DELIVER A BLOW TO "THE MILITANT, WAR-MONGER, AND REACTIONARY CIRCLES WHO ARE TRYING TO RETURN TO THE COLD WAR."

7. ON JULY 28, MEMBERS OF THE AFGHAN DELEGATION TO THE YOUTH FESTIVAL, ACCOMPANIED BY DR. SHAH WALI AND HIS DELEGATION, MET WITH REPRESENTATIVES OF THE YOUTH ORGANIZATIONS OF BULGARIA, PAKISTAN, IRAN, CHILE, AND CUBA, WHO HAILED THE AFGHAN REVOLUTION AND EXPRESSED THEIR SOLIDARITY FOR ITS SUPPORT AND DEFENSE.  
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8. COMMENT: THE AFGHAN ATTITUDE, AS REFLECTED IN THE PRESS AND IN DR. SHAH WALI'S SPEECHES REGARDING DRA TIES WITH CUBA, IS NOT REASSURING. IT SEEMS TO SUGGEST THAT THE DRA IS ATTRACTED BY THE RADICAL CUBAN VERSION OF NONALIGNMENT. THE VISITS AND THE ACCOMPANYING PUBLICITY COULD INDICATE TOO THAT AFGHANISTAN AND CUBA ARE DEVELOPING A CLOSER BILATERAL RELATIONSHIP. WE MIGHT EVEN SEE AN EXCHANGE OF RESIDENT AMBASSADORS SOON. THE PARTICIPATION OF AFGHANISTAN IN THE YOUTH FESTIVAL ALSO REPRESENTS A FURTHER STEP IN THE DEVELOPMENT OF THIS REGIME'S TIES WITH MEMBERS OF THE INTERNATIONAL LEFTIST MOVEMENT.  
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